

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 1389

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, SA, XF
SUBJECT: VISIT OF PRINCE ABDULLAH ON MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT PROCESS

REF: JIDDA 0387

1. WE HAVE RECEIVED FOLLOWING REPORT FROM BG JOHN HUDACHEK, SANG,
MODERNIZATION PROGRAM, BETWEEN GENERAL HUDACHEK, AND PRINCE ABDULLAH,

SANG COMMANDER.

2. QUOTE: AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND HOUR PRINCE
ADDULLAH STATED THAT HE WISHED TO GIVE ME HIS THOUGHTS ON
THE CURRENT MIDDLE EAST SITUATION. PRINCE ABDULLAH EX-
PRESSED WHAT I PERCEIVED TO BE SINCERE DEEP CONCERN OVER
THE LACK OF POSITIVE ACTION BY THE USG TO SUPPORT PRESIDENT
SADAT'S PEACE INITIATVE. HE STATED THAT WITHIN THE PAST
FEW WEEKS THROUGH SANG INTELLIGENCE SOURCES HE IS RECEIVING
A STRONG INDICATION THAT THE PEOPLE OF SAUDI ARABIA ARE
BEGINNING TO QUESTION WHY SAG MAINTAINS CLOSE TIES WITH
THE USG WHEN THE USG IS TAKING NO OVERT ACTIONS TO ASSIST
IN REACHING A PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ARABS AND THE
ISRAELIS. HE STATED THAT HIS SOURCES INDICATED THAT THE
PEOPLE WERE BECOMING HOSTILE TO USG POLICIES AND WERE
SUGGESTING THAT THE SAG ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELA-
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TIONS WITH THE USSR SINCE THE USSR COULD BE RELIED UPON
TO TAKE MORE POSITIVE ACTION THAN THE USG. HE FURTHER
STATED THAT WITHIN THE PAST TWO WEEKS A FEW MEMBERS OF THE
ROYAL FAMILY HAD DISCUSSED WITH PRINCE ABDULLAH THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE USSR. THE
PRINCE STATED THAT HE WAS VIOLENTLY OPPOSED TO SUCH DIS-
CUSSIONS. PRINCE ABDULLAH INDICATED VERY DEEL PERSONAL

CONCERN OVER THIS TREND. HE BELIEVES THAT THE U.S. PEOPLE AND THE USG DO NOT BELIEVE THAT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD EVER ALIGN ITSELF WITH THE USSR. HE STATED THAT UP UNTIL A FEW MONTHS AGO HE BELIEVED THAT THIS WAS UNTHINKABLE, YET THERE ARE NOW INDICATIONS THAT SUCH AN ALIGNMENT MAY OCCUR IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HE BELIEVES THAT USSR INFLUENCE IS METHODICALLY ENCIRCLING SAUDI ARABIA AND THE FREE WORLD MAJOR OIL SUPPLY. HE REINFORCED THIS POINT BY DISCUSSING USSR AND CUBAN SUPPORT OF ETHIOPIA AGAINST SOMALIA. HE SINCERELY BELIEVES THAT UNLESS THIS TREND IS STOPPED IT WILL LEAD TO A MAJOR WAR. HE INDICATED THAT THE TREND CAN ONLY BE STOPPED THROUGH POSITIVE ACTION BY THE USG TO AGGRESSIVELY AND FAIRLY SUPPORT BOTH THE ARAB AND ISRAELI INITIATIVES TO ACHIEVE A JUST PEACE SETTLEMENT. END QUOTE.

COMMENT: THIS IS NOT FIRST TIME THAT WE HAVE HEARD OF POSSIBILITY OF RAPPROCHMENT BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA AND USSR. IN MEETING WITH CODEL WILLIAMS/STEVENS ON JANUARY 9 (REFTEL) SANG DEPUTY COMMANDER PRINCE BADR SUGGESTED THAT SAUDI ARABIA COULD GET ARMS FROM USSR BUT THEN HE AND ASSISTANT DEPUTY COMMANDER TURAYJIRI BOTH SAID THAT THOUGHT THAT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD TURN TO USSR WAS UNTHINKABLE. WE DO NOT KNOW WHO PRINCE ABDULLAH IS REFERRING TO WHEN HE SPEAKS OF "THE PEOPLE OF SAUDI ARABIA." WE DOUBT THAT THERE ARE ANY INFLUENTIAL ELEMENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA WHO ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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SERIOUSLY PRESSING FOR RELATIONS WITH USSR. THIS IS PROBABLY ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO INDICATE TO USG HOW STRONGLY CERTAIN MEMBERS OF ROYAL FAMILY FEEL ABOUT NECESSITY FOR PROGRESS IN MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT PROCESS. WHAT MANY OF THEM FEEL IS THAT, IF SADAT INITIATIVE FAILS, HE WILL BE SWEEPED AWAY AND SAUDI ARABIA WILL HAVE YET ANOTHER RADICAL, SOVIET-ORIENTED ARAB NEIGHBOR. AS ENCIRCLEMENT

PROGRESSES, WINDS OF RADICALISM WILL BLOW ACROSS SAUDI ARABIA CAUSING DOWNFALL OF MONARCHY AND REORIENTATION OF REGIME TO SOVIET CAMP. WEST

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